

Utah CCGP - Closing the Gap Report (Large Group)
Hillcrest Junior High School
Murray City School District
2007-2008
6-4-08

ABSTRACT

The HJH large group project was founded from the 2006-2007 USOE CGP evaluation results relative to students at Hillcrest Junior High (HJH) not being cognizant of the SEOP meetings, SEOP plans and not remembering exploring vocations on the computer. The goal of this study was to increase students' reactivity/level of awareness to the SEOP, the SEOP process and career exploration.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Introduction

The HJH large group project was founded from the USOE CGP evaluation results from the 06-07 school year. The results suggested that Hillcrest Junior High School students were not cognizant of the SEOP meeting, SEOP plans and had not remembered exploring vocations on the computer. The purpose of this study was to increase students' reactivity to the SEOP process and career exploration.

Method

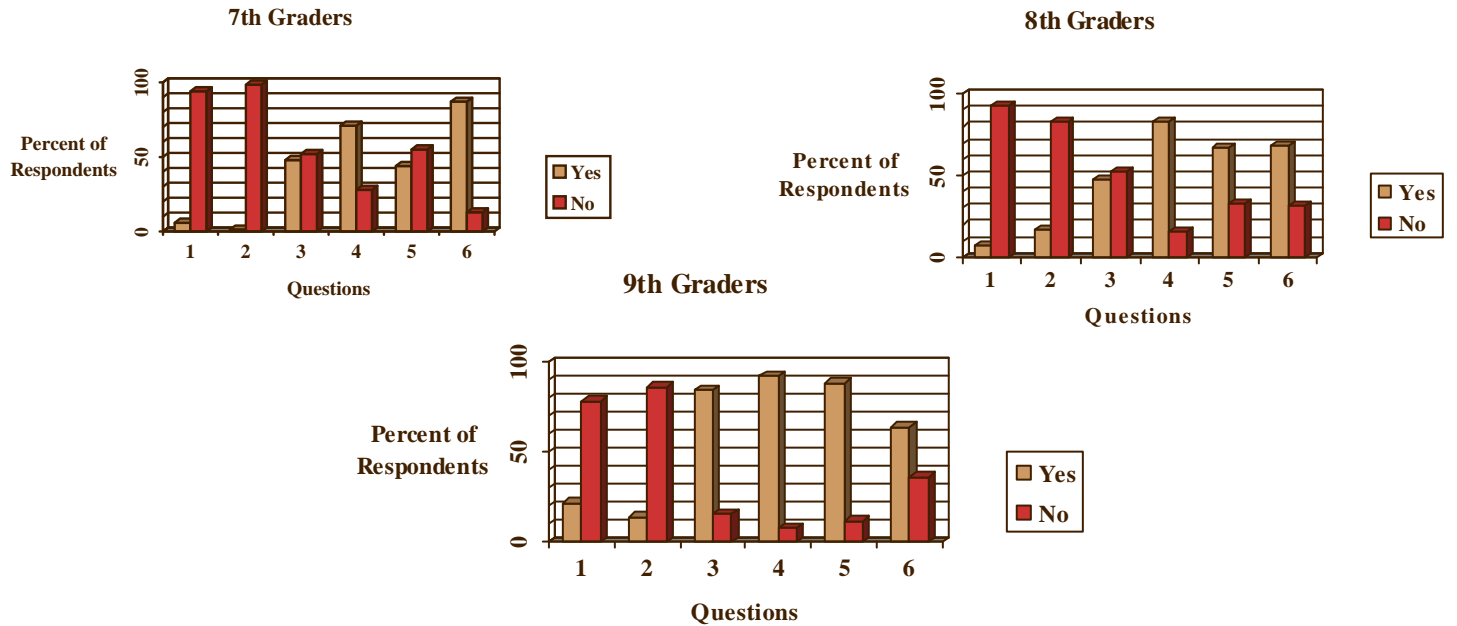
A new electronic SEOP curriculum was introduced using the Bridges Explorer web based program. The program incorporated the use of dynamic student personal skill and interest rating correlated to vocational attributes. The HJH Counseling Department developed a six item survey with which to administer a pre/post survey. The survey was administered to all 7th, 8th and 9th grade students at the beginning and end of the 2007-2008 school year. The survey allowed students to rate their awareness of the SEOP process and career exploration. The survey items included:

1. Do you know what an SEOP is?
2. Do you have an SEOP?
3. Have you ever used a computer to explore careers?
4. Do you know who your counselor is?
5. Have you met with and interacted with the counselors?
6. Do adults respond to students needs?

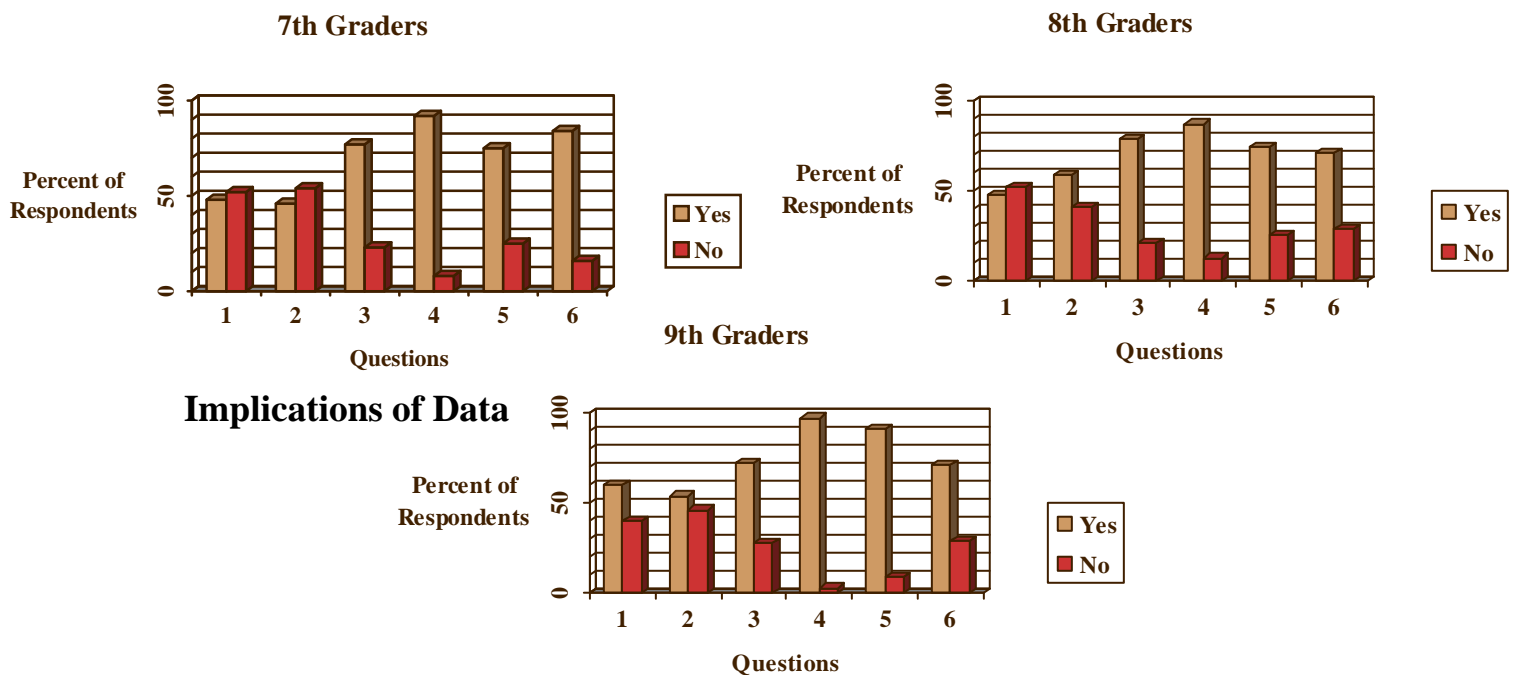
RESULTS

The initial Pre Sampling of the student body suggested there was a pervasive lack of awareness of their SEOP or SEOP meeting. The Post Sampling survey results demonstrated a statistically significant increase of awareness of the SEOP, process and career exploration across all grade levels. 7th and 8th grade awareness increased by roughly 45% and 9th grade increased by roughly 35% (see data below.)

Pre Sampling HJH 07-08



Post Sampling HJH 07-08



Implications of Data

Utah CCGP – Closing the Gap Report (Small Group)
Hillcrest Jr. High School
Murray City School District
2007-2008

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to follow the academic progress of our current 9th grade student population over a two year span (school years 2006-2007 and 2007-2008) to determine if quarterly meetings with a school counselor and at-risk students, along with a phone conversation with the parents of these at-risk students each term would make a significant difference in students' academic performance. Our 2006-2007 target group consisted of a sample of Hillcrest 8th grade students who were failing two or more classes around midterm time during terms 3 and 4. The school counselor met one time during both of the terms with each of the sample group members, and made one phone call a term to each of the students' parents right after mid-term grades were posted. At the end of the 2006-2007 school year we examined the change in mid-term and final grades for these students by tallying the presence of and the increase or reduction of "F" grades each term. The results from our 2006-2007 study indicated that our quarterly meetings and parent contacts made a positive difference in the students' academic performance. We were pleased with the results of the study, and decided to continue monitoring the academic progress of the same group of students during their 9th grade year at Hillcrest.

Our 2007-2008 target group was a sample of 9th grade students who were failing one or more classes at the time that Hillcrest's 1st deficiency notices were sent out (approximately 2 weeks after each quarter began) during terms 1 and 2 of the 2007-2008 school year. The school counselor met one time during both of the terms with each of the sample group members, and made one phone call a term to each of these students' parents right after the 1st deficiency notices were sent out. At the end of the 2007-2008 school year, we examined the change in the students grades at the time of 1st deficiency notices and the final grades of these students by tallying the presence of and the increase or reduction of "F" grades each term.

At this point in our study, our hypothesis was that quarterly meetings and parent phone conferences earlier in the school year (at the time of 1st deficiency notices rather than mid-term of the quarter) would have an even greater impact on students' academic performance by reducing the number of F grades they received. Our results for our 2007-2008 target group showed a significant reduction in the number of F's they received during 1st and 2nd quarters when compared to the results of our 2006-2007 study – our results indicated that earlier quarterly meetings and parent contacts made an even greater difference in our students' academic performance!

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Introduction

- The purpose of this study was to follow the academic progress of our current 9th grade student population over a two year span (school years 2006-2007 and 2007-2008) to determine if quarterly meetings with a school counselor and at-risk students, along with a phone conversation with the parents of these at-risk students each term would make a significant difference in students' academic performance.
- The goal of this study was to reduce the frequency of failing grades the students received.

Participants

- During terms 3 and 4 of the year 2007 and terms 1 and 2 of 2008 we monitored the academic progress of approximately 115 of our students (last names A – J in the alphabet). During terms 1 and 2 of 2008 there were 52 different 9th grade students in the target group that the school counselor met with and contacted their parents regarding their academic progress. In comparison, in terms 3 and 4 of 2007 there were 41 different 8th grade students in the target group involved in our study. It should also be noted that 25 of the students (8th graders) who were in the target group of the 2006-2007 study were also part of the target group (9th graders) of the 2007-2008 study.

Method

The project started at the beginning of 3rd quarter of the 2006-2007 school year and concluded at the end of 2nd quarter of the 2007-2008 school year.

Before the school counselor met with each failing student during each of the terms, she made phone calls home to the parents of each student she planned to conference with to update the parents of the students' current academic progress, to let them know she would be meeting with their student, and to inform them she would be sending home progress reports and other

pertinent information. During the meetings with each of these failing students, the counselor went over current grade printouts, discussed high school credit/graduation requirements, and gave study skill suggestions. The counselor encouraged students to use their daily planners or tracking sheets to help them be organized and to let parents know their progress on a daily basis. She encouraged students/parents to have the students (who were failing math classes) attend the after school Math Tutoring Program for extra help. The counselor informed students/parents of any failed core classes needing to be remediated and encouraged students to enroll in the school remediation program. As deemed appropriate, the counselor would refer some of these failing students to our school social worker and/or our School Success Class for daily help/monitoring and to assist students with school organization and performance.

Evaluation included the use of the Utah State Student Information System (SIS) Low Achievement Lists for 1st deficiency notices, midterm reports and end of term reports. Our focus was on the presence of, and the increase or reduction of “F” grades at 1st deficiency notices, mid-terms and at the end of each quarter.

RESULTS

Our current hypothesis was that quarterly meetings and parent phone conferences earlier in the school year (at the time of 1st deficiency notices rather than mid-term of the quarter) would have an even greater impact on students’ academic performance by reducing the number of F grades they received. Our results for our 2007-2008 target group showed a significant reduction in the number of F’s they received during 1st and 2nd quarters when compared to the results of our 2006-2007 study – our results indicated that earlier quarterly meetings and parent contacts made an even greater difference in our students’ academic performance. A delineation of the data can be seen below.

School year 2006-2007 Student Meetings/Parent Contacts Occurring After Midterms

	Students Failing 2 or More Classes at Midterm	Students Who Improved and Had No Failing Grades at Terms End	Students Who Decreased the Amount of F’s They Had By the Terms End	Students Who Ended Up Failing the Same # of Classes As They Were at Midterm	Students Who Ended Up Failing More Classes Than They Were at Midterm
8th grade Term 3	27	1 (4%)	17 (63%)	6 (22%)	3 (11%)
8th grade Term 4	34	8 (24%)	17 (50%)	6 (18%)	3 (8%)
*Total	61	9 (15%)	34 (56%)	12 (20%)	6 (9%)

School year 2007-2008 Student Meetings/Parent Contacts occurring After 1st Deficiency Notices

	Students Failing 1 or More Classes at the time of 1 st deficiency notices	Students Who Improved and Had No Failing Grades at Terms End	Students Who Decreased the Amount of F’s They Had By the Terms End	Students Who Ended Up Failing the Same # of Classes As They Were at the time of 1 st deficiency notice	Students Who Ended Up Failing More Classes Than They Were at the time of 1 st deficiency notice
9th grade Term 1	25	16 (64%)	4 (16%)	2 (8%)	3 (12%)
9th grade Term 2	43	27 (63%)	9 (21%)	6 (14%)	1 (2%)
*Total	68	43 (63%)	13 (19%)	8 (12%)	4 (6%)

DISCUSSION

After reviewing our results from our data over the last two years, we arrived at the following conclusions: Our data shows some positive results. During the first phase of our study, in term 3 of 2007, after meeting with failing students and making parent contacts right after midterm grades were posted 67% of these students ended up decreasing the amount of F grades they received. During term 4 of 2007, 74% of the students ended up decreasing the amount of F's they had. During the 1st term of the next school year (2007-2008), after meeting with failing students and making parent contacts at an earlier time of the quarter (right after the 1st deficiency notices came out), 80% of these students ended up decreasing the amount of F grades they received. During term 2 of 2008, 84% of the students ended up decreasing the amount of F's they had. The results over the last two years show a steady and continual increase of students who were successful in decreasing the amount of F grades they were receiving before they met with the school counselor and had their parents contacted each quarter. After seeing these results, we feel that meeting with the students at an earlier date in the quarter (at the time of 1st deficiency notices rather than at mid-terms) was directly related to the 17% increase (from 67% to 84%) in students who were successful in decreasing their F grades during the study

It is also interesting to note the difference regarding the number of students who improved and ended up with no failing grades in the first and second years of our study. In the 2006-2007 school year, during term 3 only 4% of the students ended up improving and having no failing grades. In the 2007-2008 year the number of students who improved and ended up with no failing grades jumped up to 64% in term 1 and 63% in term 2. We were excited to see this substantial improvement in academic performance, and feel that meeting with the students at an earlier date in the quarter was directly related to the increase in student performance during the 2nd year of the study. Many of the students who were involved in the study also reported that they felt it was beneficial to meet with the counselor earlier in the quarter – they reported the extra time was helpful in enabling them to “get their act together” and get their grades in order.

In conclusion, we feel that having quarterly student/counselor meetings and parent phone conferences improved our students' academic performance by reducing the number of F grades they received. This was evident when we conducted our meetings and parent contacts at the midterm of each quarter, and even more so when we conducted our meetings and parent contacts earlier in the quarter – after the first deficiency notices were sent. We can use this data summary to help us identify our 9th grade students who are at-risk academically, and to help us in referring these students to the school success program at Murray High School.